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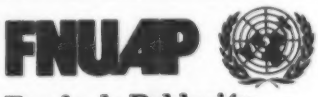

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The "Broker Issue"
by Jaya Dayal and Farhan Haq **8**
Population is "a broker issue—it touches everything else," as one senior delegate put it last month at "Prepcom II," the second session of the Preparatory Committee for next year's International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). Human rights, reproductive health, and migration were among the key topics at Prepcom II, where participants from governments, international agencies, and some 400 non-governmental organizations debated the themes for discussion at ICPD.

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Time for realism **11**
Chronic water scarcity is besetting an increasing number of countries, but leaders trying to solve water woes can count on only so much help from scientists. The trouble is, the experts themselves suffer from "water blindness." It is time to turn the traditional approach to water management on its head: Time to stop asking "How much water do we need, and where do we get it?" and to start asking "How much water is there, and how do we use that amount to our greatest benefit?" Scientist Malin Falkenmark has some ideas.

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READEX
FICHE

Immunity from Pregnancy?

A vaccine against pregnancy developed by Indian scientists has proved successful during trials, with only one out of 119 women tested becoming pregnant, Agence France Presse reports. Developed by the National Institute of Immunology, the vaccine was declared effective in keeping with international contraceptive standards a year ago, when not one pregnancy occurred during 750 menstrual cycles. During the second phase of testing, there was one pregnancy in the 1,042 menstrual cycles studied. Officials say the vaccine is the first ever to have got this far in trials, but they caution that their product is still in research and development, and is "a long way off" from being marketed.

Meanwhile, a similar hormonal vaccine against fertility developed for men is expected to enter the first phase of human clinical testing some time this year. The vaccine, developed by the Indian Institute of Science, has already been tested on monkeys.

Bees in your bonnet?

POPULI welcomes contributions to the Viewpoints section, and encourages interested readers to send us your thoughts on issues you consider burning ones. Preference will be given to informed comment and cogent argument on current policy or programme issues in population and related fields, including health, gender, sustainable development, migration, and economy. Please address your manuscripts or query letters to the editor, and include an author's biographical note of about 50 words. Manuscripts should be in English, typed with double spacing, and run to between 750 and 1500 words. They may be mailed or faxed to us; our address and fax number appear on the contents page of this issue. Unaccepted manuscripts will be acknowledged and returned if you ask us to do so at the time of submission. Please provide your address and, if available, your phone and fax numbers, to make it easier for us to consult you during editing.

Faulty Condoms

Indonesians' condoms are likely to fail 30 per cent of the time, according to Firman Lubis of the University of Indonesia's school of medicine. He told the *Jakarta Post* newspaper last month that condoms sold at street stalls are especially likely to deteriorate in the heat and humidity. He urged users to check their condoms thoroughly before use.

Quick HIV Test

A Canadian firm says it has developed a test kit that can tell within seven minutes if a person is HIV-positive. The tests can be given and interpreted without laboratories or electricity, and should be ideal for use in developing countries, says Daniel Bland, president of Empyrean Diagnostics Inc. of Vancouver. The kit tests a drop of whole blood, whereas other kits test serum, a component of blood. The company says it plans to "blanket" the developing world with the kits. There are other rapid test kits for HIV, the human immunodeficiency virus, on the market.

Better Pill for Over-40s

A Finnish drug company claims to market an oral contraceptive that is safer than others for women older than 40, and those over 35 who smoke. The Leiras company says the pill produces fewer harmful side-effects because it contains natural, rather than synthetic, oestrogen. The pill is unique in containing only natural oestrogen, Erkki Hirvonen told the Reuters news agency. Hirvonen is a senior lecturer and participated in the 10-year project involving 600 women that produced the pill. Studies show pills with synthetic oestrogen may cause blood clots in women smokers of a "mature age." The pill went on sale in April, and is aimed at women 35-49 years old. Hirvonen says it can be used up to and beyond menopause. It neither reduces nor increases the risk of the harmful side-effects of smoking, the company says.

Dwindling Children

The number of Japanese younger than 15 years fell by about half a million to 21,100,000 in the year to 1 April, according to a government survey published by the Kyodo news agency. The proportion of under-15s dwindled to less than 17 per cent of the country's population, down half a percentage point from the previous year, confirming a trend thought to have begun in 1975, Kyodo reports. Among the major industrialized countries, only Germany and Italy are thought to have smaller proportions of their populations younger than 15. Meanwhile, a recent study by the Japan Medical Association predicts that one in four Japanese will be older than 65 by the year 2025, making Japan the world's "greyest" society.

Female Condom Approved

The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) last month approved the first female condom for distribution in the USA. The Wisconsin Pharmacal Company, North American distributor of the Reality® female condom, says it hopes to make the device available to health care professionals some time next month. Retail sales will not begin until the FDA approves the

device's British manufacturer, Chartex International. Known in other parts of the world as Femidom®, the female condom is a vaginal pouch made from polyurethane. "The woman inserts it like she would a tampon," says Mary Ann Leeper, senior vice president at Wisconsin Pharmacal. In clinical trials, the pregnancy rate for women using the device was 13 per cent, compared to 8 per cent for the standard latex male condom, probably because the female condom is more difficult to use correctly. Nevertheless, three in four couples involved in the trials said they liked using it, according to Wisconsin Pharmacal. The polyurethane used to make the device is stronger than latex and is resistant to oils, the company claims, adding that regular latex condoms break when used with oil-based lubricants. Despite a price regarded by some as prohibitive—US$2.50 each—Reality is broadly considered a major advance for women wanting to protect themselves against sexually transmitted diseases, but who are unable to insist their partners wear condoms.

ICPD Update

The latest on the lead-up to the International Conference on Population and Development, 5-13 September 1994, Cairo, Egypt.

Round-table on the Media

The Austrian government has offered to host a round-table meeting on information and the media in the run-up to Cairo, according to ICPD Secretary-General Nafis Sadik. Participants in the round-table would explore ways to create awareness of population issues in general and to promote the Cairo conference itself, Dr. Sadik told journalists in New York on 21 May, the last day of "Prepcom II," the second session of the Preparatory Committee for ICPD. The dates and venue of the round-table have yet to be set. For more information, contact: ICPD Secretariat, c/o UNFPA, 220 East 42nd Street, 17th floor, New York, NY 10017, USA. Or: NGO Planning Committee for ICPD, 777 United Nations Plaza, Suite 7-C, New York, NY 10017, USA.

Money Matters

How much is ICPD likely to cost? US$11-12 million, according to conference Secretary-General Nafis Sadik. Just over half the amount will have been spent on the preparatory process—national and regional conferences, three sessions of the Preparatory Committee for ICPD, and the operations of the ICPD Secretariat—leading up to the 1994 Cairo conference, Dr. Sadik told journalists at a press conference in New York last month. The estimated total cost is "quite modest" compared to similar conferences, she said.

Upcoming Events

- 1-18 June, UN Headquarters, New York: UNFPA's Governing Council; discussion of ICPD on the agenda.
- 26-27 August, Ottawa, Canada: Round-table meeting on Women's Perspectives on Family Planning, Reproductive Health, and Reproductive Rights.
- 21 September-mid-December, UN Headquarters, New York: Forty-eighth regular session of the UN General Assembly; discussion of ICPD on the agenda.
- 11-22 April 1994, UN Headquarters, New York: Third meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on Population and Development 1994.

Haitian Asylum-Seekers:

Legal limbo

Some 180 Haitian "boat people" seeking political asylum in the United States have been detained behind razor wire for more than a year at the US naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, their future in legal limbo.

US immigration authorities have determined that the Haitian asylum-seekers have plausible claims for status as refugees from political persecution in Haiti, and therefore cannot be sent back. They are being refused entry to the US to pursue their claims, however, because they allegedly have tested positive for HIV, the human immunodeficiency virus. Their fate now hangs on several law suits brought on their behalf by American and Haitian human rights groups.

These Haitians are all who remain in US custody after the mass exodus of refugees from their country that began in September 1991, with the Army-led ouster of the elected government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Between November 1991 and May 1992, an estimated 40,000 Haitians fled their island country in small boats and were intercepted in international waters by the US Coast Guard, who brought them to Guantanamo Bay. All of the refugees asked for political asylum in the US. The US Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) conducted preliminary interviews and deemed some 10,000 to be legitimate asylum-seekers, and permitted them to enter the US to pursue their claims further. The remaining 30,000 were returned to Haiti.

UN/Milton Grant

Before the exodus: Haitians voting in December, 1990.

In the spring of 1992, as the refugees' advocates tell it, a group of refugee families at Guantanamo were gathered in an unused airplane hangar, ostensibly for final processing for their trip to the US. There, military authorities informed them over loudspeakers that either they or close family members were HIV-positive and would not be allowed to leave Guantanamo. When these 292 people were not given access to legal counsel, a suit was brought on their behalf by the Lowenstein International Human Rights Clinic of Yale Law School, the New York-based Center for Constitutional Rights, the American Civil Liberties Union, the San Francisco Lawyers' Committee for Urban Affairs, and the private law firm of Simpson, Thacher & Bartlett, with the participation of Haitian refugee rights advocacy groups led by the Haitian Refugee Center in Miami. The suit, "Haitian Centers Council v. Sale," challenges the detention of refugees incommunicado and asks for the right to legal representation and relief from "discriminatory incarceration." The law suit argues that the Haitians were denied liberty without due process of law and that they are being unjustly discriminated against because they are HIV positive.

Thirty-six of these Haitians were paroled into the US in March 1993, when a court ordered the government to either provide appropriate medical care at Guantanamo or to evacuate those ill enough to a place other than Haiti where they could receive adequate care. A final ruling on the status of the 180 people remaining at Guantanamo is due from the US Supreme Court.

US Justice Department spokesperson Joseph Krovisky points out that it is the Department's policy not to comment on current litigation. In a telephone interview, he explained that it was the Department's role to defend the government against suits, and that in this complicated case, policy towards Haitian refugees was made by the US State Department and administered by the INS.

Meanwhile, the flow of "boat people" from Haiti came to a virtual end after then-US President George Bush instituted a policy of "summary return." Under the policy, Haitians fleeing their country were taken into custody at sea, their boats were sunk, and they were brought directly back to Haiti on board Coast Guard ships. Returnees were told to make their requests for political asylum from within Haiti. The policy remains in place under President Bill Clinton. In a 2 March statement, White House communications director George Stephanopoulos explained that "the current practice of direct returns is based on the President's conviction that it is necessary to avert a humanitarian tragedy that could result from a

large boat exodus...in overloaded, unseaworthy vessels."

The policy has been challenged in the courts, and, last year, several injunctions and restraining orders were issued against the policy of interdiction. The Supreme Court overruled the lower courts' injunctions; a final decision is still pending. The outstanding suits maintain that summary return violates the United States Refugee Act of 1980 and the UN Convention on Refugees, which the US signed in 1968, according to attorney Muriel Heiberger of the Massachusetts Immigration and Refugee Advocacy Group.

The INS position, as presented in court by the Justice Department, maintains that the refugees are not entitled to guarantees provided by the US Constitution or to protection under US laws, because people interdicted in international waters have not been in the United States, and that none of the circumstances and actions described in the law suits occurred on US territory. The case is pending in the courts, a final decision expected soon.

–Jeff Perkell

Cindy Reimon

Taking it to the people: A family planning counsellor at work in Mexico.

Latin America and the Caribbean:

Pulling together

Representatives of Latin American and Caribbean countries last month agreed to support each others' family planning and population education programmes.

Delegates from the region adopted the Latin American Consensus on Population and Development on 4 May, at the end of a regional conference in Mexico City organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and UNFPA. The conference was one of a series of regional meetings in preparation for the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development.

In recent decades, the region has been undergoing a demographic transition toward population trends similar to those in the industrialized world. The average annual population growth rate, estimated at 2.71 per cent in the 1960s, is now thought to have fallen to around 1.7 per cent. The decline is likely to continue into the early part of the next century, experts say. They attribute it primarily to a fall in the average number of children per woman, which since the 1960s has dropped from around six to three.

Behind the overall similarities, however, lie marked differences between individual countries and, region-wide, between the poorest 46 per cent and the rest of the population.

Since mid-century, infant mortality has dropped from 125 to 53 per thousand live births. But while the rate is about 15 per thousand in Cuba and Puerto Rico, it is still around 100 per thousand in Bolivia and Haiti.

Guatemalans have an average life expectancy of 63 years, four years below the regional average; Uruguayans can reasonably expect to live to the age of 73.

Experts and delegates at the regional conference in Mexico City agreed that the process of demographic transition is not so much the result of family planning strategies, which remain few and far between in the region, as of reduced poverty rates and increased literacy rates during the 1960s and 1970s and, to a lesser extent, the growth of mass media.

In the so-called "lost decade" of the 1980s, however, when the region's economy suffered major setbacks, and in the 1990s so far, when most of the region's countries embarked on recovery at the cost of severe cuts in social spending, the proportion of the population living in poverty grew from 40 to 46 per cent. Although the rise in poverty so far seems not to have interrupted the decline in fertility, statistics show that the gap between the number of children a woman wants and actually has is widest among the poorest—evidence that those most in need of services are being denied them, according to UNFPA Executive Director Nafis Sadik.

"Action programmes should be fully accessible to the poorest and hardest to reach communities, in both rural and urban areas," Dr. Sadik said. "These communities are the least able to afford private services and commonly rely on publicly provided health and education. We must work to ensure that the public sector is able to fulfil its responsibilities in this regard."

Sadik urged participants to see the progress made so far as an incentive to take more decisive action against problems that remain serious, including high maternal mortality rates that are mainly the result of the "millions" of unsafe, illegal abortions performed in the region each year.

In the region, only Cuba has legalized abortion. Cuban delegate Raul Taladrid explained that "we are not pro-abortion"; faced with clandestine abortions being performed "in unsafe conditions which threatened the woman's health, we preferred to leave the decision to interrupt a pregnancy up to the couple."

Sadik also emphasized that one of the main advances at the conference was that, irrespective of each country's policies, all population issues were discussed openly. She referred to an emerging awareness of the choices and responsibilities of individuals, societies, and states.

The most tangible demonstration that the region has thought hard about the need to confront population problems is the acceptance of Mexico's proposal to draw up a plan of action for the entire region so that, while preserving diversity of opinion, countries with more resources or greater success in programming can co-operate with countries whose population growth rates remain high. The Mexican initiative, which should take shape in the coming months, was welcomed by all delegations.

The discussions in Mexico City also touched upon issues such as migration within and out of the region, with the example of El Salvador, where remittances from relatives in the United States are the Central American country's main source of income, far exceeding earnings from its traditional export, coffee.

–Pablo Iacub

Donor evaluation:

Mixed success?

UNFPA has made "excellent progress in establishing its crediblity and in promoting population as a critical development issue," but its work with governments has been at the cost of closer relations with non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This, according to the report of an external evaluation of the Fund's operations.

The Fund's reliance on governments to implement projects has resulted in "lost opportunities in working with the private sector and NGOs," says Steve Mendelsohn, leader of the six-person evaluation team.

The evaluation was sponsored by the official development agencies of Canada, Finland, and Germany, and conducted by consultants from those countries. They studied the Fund during 1992 and early 1993.

An executive summary of the team's report states that "there has been very limited [project] execution through the private sector or through NGOs." Moreover, "projects are either supported because of government pressure or not executed by the best executing agencies." Rather, the Fund should "encourage competition" among UN agencies, NGOs, and private companies interested in executing projects.

UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) Joseph Van Arendonk says he agrees that "to a certain extent, the partnership that we have with governments encumbers our freedom." But he points out that, as a UN agency, the Fund is required to work at the invitation of and through host governments.

"As a Fund, we're very, very interested in NGOs and feel that the NGO world is extremely important," Van Arendonk says. "Where we can, we work with NGOs, but there are a number of countries where, because the governments have said no, we have lost the opportunity to work with NGOs."

The summary report says that in the past, UNFPA country programmes have also relied too heavily on other UN agencies to execute projects, in some cases "with unsatisfactory results in terms of quality of project management and technical support." It says UN agency execution has suffered from poor management, monitoring, and evaluation, inconsistent and sometimes unavailable technical expertise, and inadequate local project management. It recommends the Fund play "a greater role in ensuring project quality and that all parties involved in projects are held accountable."

Mendelsohn says one of UNFPA's greatest handicaps is that it is "overstretched and lacks resources." The Fund assists population programmes and activities in some 140 countries, has field offices in 95 countries, and country directors in 59. Last year, its staff of 801 worked with a budget of US$225 million.

"UNFPA is trying to meet demands around the world with a very limited staff and a limited budget," the report states. "The result has been dilution of effort and a reduction in quality and impacts."

The team recommends the Fund "prioritize its allocations to those countries that are likely to produce the largest impacts for the dollars spent."

In Mendelsohn's view, "more emphasis should be placed on rewarding countries where attempts have been made by the countries themselves to move ahead with their population programmes." Resources should be allocated not only on the basis of need, but also on a country's "attitude and practices."

Van Arendonk disagrees, saying: "If a country is ready and can use the money then fine, but if a country is not ready and you have to build up that readiness, I wouldn't call that a waste, but pre-investment."

The team's findings were based on a review of documents and interviews at the

Fund's headquarters in New York; meetings with donors and agencies involved in population programmes; and case studies of UNFPA-assisted programmes in Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, Kenya, and Senegal. The report was presented at a briefing in New York which coincided with the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development.

–Jaya Dayal/IPS

Istanbul Declaration:

Teach your children well

Population education should join reading, writing, and arithmetic on the curriculum of your local school, according to the Istanbul Declaration, adopted at the International Congress on Population Education and Development, held in Istanbul, Turkey in April.

"Runaway population growth can be checked and the numbers of humans on the planet can be stabilized before catastrophe strikes," Federico Mayor, director general of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), told participants. "The key to achieving this result is education, which is essential to bringing about the changes in attitudes, values, and behaviour that enable the interlinked problems of population and sustainable development to be addressed."

Already, "more than 100 countries include population education in their school systems," UNFPA Executive Director Nafis Sadik said. "Population education has become one of the most popular educational innovations of our time."

Jorgen Schytte

No more homework, please!

What is population education? It is not sex education. "Population education contributes to the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills and values which enable individuals to gain a critical understanding of population issues and to base their judgements, decisions, and behaviour on as rational as possible an analysis of relevant facts and factors," according to *Population Education: An Action Framework on the Eve of the 21st Century*, also adopted at Istanbul. "Population education therefore aims at promoting changes in outlook, attitudes, and behaviour in individuals and groups towards population issues with a view to contributing to the improvement of the quality of life."

Those "population issues" include: age of marriage, adolescent pregnancy, family size, gender roles, sexual health, relations between generations, internal and international migration, human settlements and population distribution, and the interaction between population, the environment, and resources.

The specific lessons your children are taught, however, "cannot be defined without due consideration of the economic and social realities and the diversity of cultural and religious values of each society," according to the action framework, which is intended as a guide for implementing the Istanbul Declaration.

Following-up on the World Conference on Education for All, the Declaration and action framework call for special efforts to reach out-of-school youth and young adults who have never attended school.

"Those concerned are usually people already of an age to procreate" and need information on how to "regulate their fertility and to take other decisions related to the quality of their life, especially prevention of maternal and infant mortality and prevention of HIV/AIDS and managing migrations," the action framework states.

The document adds: "Education will contribute towards promoting behaviour which could immediately satisfy these needs: delay the age of marriage, space out births, reduce infant mortality, etc."

Education ministers, other government officials, and experts from some 92 countries participated in the 14-17 April Congress. It was the first meeting of its kind, according to UNESCO and UNFPA, the event's organizers.

The "Broker Issue"

by Jaya Dayal and Farhan Haq

It's not just about family planning any more. That seemed to be the consensus at "Prepcom II," the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

Rather, population is "a broker issue—it touches everything else," as United States chief delegate Tim Wirth put it.

Participants from governments, some 400 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and international agencies gathered at United Nations headquarters for the 10-21 May meeting, the second of three "prepcoms" leading up to ICPD, which is scheduled for 5-13 September 1994 in Cairo, Egypt.

Delegates at Prepcom II were tasked with ironing out the rules for participation at, and setting the themes for, the decennial discussions in Cairo.

According to the orally amended agenda, or "proposed conceptual framework," the ICPD final document would address a broad range of issues under three general headings:

- A section on "Choices and Responsibilities" would deal with the interrelationships between population, sustained economic growth, and sustainable development; gender equality and women's empowerment; population growth and structure; the role and composition of the family; reproductive rights, reproductive health, and family planning; health and mortality; and population distribution, urbanization, and internal and international migration.
- Under the heading "Means of Implementation," subsequent chapters would address the promotion of population information, education, and communication; capacity-building; and technology, research, and development.
- Under the heading "Partnership in Population—Actors and Resources," the document would suggest the course of national action; international co-operation; and partnerships with NGOs.

"This conference is finally about choices and responsibilities—for the individual, the community, the nation, and the world," ICPD Secretary-General Nafis Sadik explained. "Its aim is to widen our freedom of choice" on family size, population issues, and development philosophy and policies. "If we wish for a wider range of choice, we must also recognize and accept responsibility. Men must take responsibility for contraception and fatherhood, communities for the weaker and most vulnerable members, nations for the well-being of their people, and the global community for the future of the environment, on which all else depends. If we are willing to take on our responsibilities now, we and our children will find a wider range of choice in the future."

A series of global goals for the year 2015 should be adopted at Cairo, to attain "the basic components of an acceptable quality of life," Dr. Sadik told participants.

The goals she proposed include reducing infant and maternal death rates in developing countries to levels common in the industrialized world, and slowing population growth so that human numbers do not exceed 7.27 billion by 2015—the UN's low projection, some 350 million people fewer than the medium, or most likely, projection.

On the agenda for Cairo:

"Choices and responsibilities."

"A call for quantifiable, reachable goals is unusual for a conference such as ours, but not unprecedented," Dr. Sadik said, adding: "The proposed 20-year time-frame offers the necessary flexibility of response by individual countries and the wider community." In the interim, governments could set five- and 10-year plans to render the longer-term goals more immediate.

The end of demography?

Emphasis on human rights, equality, and reproductive health came early, when women's health and rights advocates delivered a Women's Declaration on Population Policies stating clear opposition to policies "driven more by demographic goals than by quality of life goals." In the view of the Declaration's international

Jaya Dayal and Farhan Haq are correspondents at Inter Press Service Third World News Agency. POPULI editor Abid Aslam contributed additional reporting to this story.

signatories, "to assure the well-being of all people, and especially of women, population policies and programmes must be framed within and implemented as part of broader development strategies that will redress the unequal distribution of resources and power between and within countries, between racial and ethnic groups, and between women and men."

Environmentalists and others raised similar challenges to the primacy of demography in population policy-making. Dawood Ghaznavi of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) warned that "population should not be treated in isolation but in the overall environmental, economic, social, and development context...Even if high population growth rates were drastically reduced, the high rates of consumption and pollution would eventually more than offset any environmental gains."

The Earth Times

Delegates deliberating.

The Women's Declaration, which was composed by more than 100 organizations from around the world, proposes multiplying present population programme expenditures four-fold (one of a number of calls for increased funding), and allocating at least 20 per cent of "available resources" to the women's health movement.

The theme of reproductive health was also taken up by Margaret Catley-Carlson, president of the New York-based Population Council, who told Prepcom II that "family planning programmes have to be something more than providing contraceptives—they must also seek to improve reproductive health."

Nothing new, according to Fred Sai, chair of Prepcom II, chief delegate from Ghana, and president of the International Planned Parenthood Federation: "Reproductive health has always been a part of family planning...People feel that the [traditional] terminology has narrowed the focus, but this is not, strictly speaking, a shift."

Family planning is not about "demographic achievements," but about "family well-being and responsibilities," according to Kartono Mohamad, chair of Indonesia's family planning association. "We cannot separate family planning issues from women's issues," he said.

Dr. Kartono's sentiments were shared by virtually every delegation. Statement after statement made reference to the importance of ensuring women's rights, health, and welfare.

Reacting to the discussion of gender matters, Indian family planning pioneer Avabai Wadia observed: "This is a sea change from Bucharest," site of the 1974 World Population Conference. "Women are now at the centre. They are no longer subordinate in reproduction." Representatives of women's NGOs and a number of delegates said they shared Dr. Wadia's assessment.

Others remained cautious. Rachael Pine of the US-based Center for Reproductive Law & Policy said she hoped the discussions would amount to more than "unanimity of rhetoric on women."

The theme of equality—between men and women, North and South—was broached repeatedly. In a written statement, the Malaysia-based Third World Network (TWN) stressed that population issues should be linked to "the international and national structures that determine people's access to life-sustaining resources that are becoming increasingly rare...The global and national forces that generate poverty and insecurity in the Third World have to be identified."

Tanzanian delegate Noah Musyani suggested that lack of access to contraceptives was one of the causes of insecurity in the developing world. "Both traditional and modern methods of family planning should be encouraged and promoted," he urged, arguing that traditional methods would be needed as long as the supply "of the modern methods of contraception is dependent on the donor community."

Musyani's comments underscored what observers saw as an underlying theme in the proceedings: the high cost borne by the South, often under conditions of austerity, of family planning

programmes. He said Tanzania backs efforts to look into debt-reduction schemes as a means of mobilizing much-needed resources.

On a similar note, Nahid Toubia of the Population Council noted that population experts often stressed the right to provide contraceptive services to the developing world without emphasizing a similar need to offer an affordable range of choices. The lack of such choices limits women's basic rights and damages family planning efforts, according to Dr. Toubia. "Studies have found that most women don't like invasive birth control procedures" such as intrauterine devices, or IUDs, yet population programmes often favour those methods, she said.

The problem is not restricted to developing countries: "The United States has the most privatized system of health[care] in the world, where a broad range of contraceptives is available but not readily accessible to everyone" because of prohibitive prices, Toubia said.

A "new climate of agreement" or "unanimity of rhetoric"?

Migration

Despite predictions that migration would be a rare instance of North-South divisions at Prepcom II, there were few signs of disturbance at meetings of the Informal Committee of the Whole, a sub-group tasked with examining and suggesting amendments to the draft conceptual framework. Most delegations favoured proposals to develop rural infrastructure and ease urban population burdens, to reduce trade barriers in countries of origin and industrialized countries, and to protect migrants from racism and xenophobia.

Some delegations, particularly from developing countries, did find some proposals insufficient and occasionally offensive, however. Brazilian delegates objected to the language of a proposal to "combat undocumented or irregular migration," with its implicit suggestion of a war on migrants. Delegates from Iran noted that the draft framework neglected the burden refugees place on host countries, and suggested including a proposal to provide assistance for countries hosting major refugee populations.

For their part, industrialized countries had few alterations to make in the framework where migration was concerned. Italy urged greater data collection on migration flows, a concern shared by several European states. A more profound criticism came from the United States, which objected to a statement that "governments have to safeguard the right of asylum by respecting the principle of 'non-refoulement'." A US delegate countered: "There is no absolute right to asylum, only the right to pursue asylum. States have the right to their own sovereignty."

Various delegates said such differences on immigration and other issues are real, and may yet prove significant in discussions at the next and final prepcom, slated for New York in April 1994, and at Cairo. For now, however, their report on the proposed conceptual framework speaks of "the new climate of agreement and the spirit of co-operation regarding population issues."

The Earth Times

Discussing the "conceptual framework."

WATER SCARCITY:

Time for realism

by Malin Falkenmark

We live at the mercy of the water cycle. Nowhere is this more evident than in the world's most poverty-stricken countries, which tend to lie within the climatic zones most vulnerable to drought and other water problems. Here, poverty can be measured not only in economic terms, but also in terms of water. In many of these countries, securing development depends on overcoming water scarcity.

Richard Mock

Of course, fighting against certain types of water scarcity is nothing new for local inhabitants in these regions: it is a fight inherited from their ancestors. What are new, however, are the escalating need for food, the increasing water stress, and the scale of land deterioration that accompany rapid growth in human numbers. And while human innovation can make the best possible use of water, technology cannot change the fact that the amount of water moving through a country's territory, above and below ground, is finite. Nor can we alter the rate at which water is naturally renewed from the global water circulation system. The populations of Kenya, Ethiopia, and Iran may well double within 25 years, but the amount of water available to these countries will remain the same. More and more people will have to share every flow unit of water passing through the area.

More and more countries are being pushed into conditions of water stress and even chronic water scarcity. In dry tropical countries, the dry season stretches to at least half the year, and recurrent droughts are part of the climate. Even where water is more readily available, its quality is damaged by such human activities as consumption, urbanization, and waste disposal. Already, nearly one-third of the world's inhabitants live in countries with severe water problems.

The challenge now facing the leaders of these countries is to manage difficult pre-existing environmental conditions. They can count on only so much help from scientists. In the scientific community, population and water—and other resources, for that matter—are studied within separate disciplines, each with its own terminology and priorities. This dispersion has caused a kind of scientific paralysis that blocks progress in solving current water problems and heading off impending ones.

Perhaps more to the point, most water management systems now in use come from the relatively water-abundant temperate climates of the North. When development specialists advise

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developing countries to accept the wholesale transfer of these techniques and technologies to their fragile water systems, they are showing "water blindness" or "temperate bias."

It is time to turn the traditional approach to water management on its head. It no longer makes sense to ask the question inherited from the North: "How much water do we need and where do we get it?" The opposite question would seem more useful: "How much water is there, and how do we use that amount to our greatest benefit?"

What to do

The first thing to do is to minimize water loss. Countries trying to achieve agricultural self-sufficiency are wont to invest heavily in irrigation, since no agriculture is possible without it. Yet, irrigation is a major culprit in water loss. Most water is lost to evaporation, leaving too little to recharge aquifers and rivers. Soil must be tended so that as much rainfall as possible can rapidly infiltrate it. Plant growth—trees as well as crops—should be encouraged, but only to an extent that permits sufficient water to feed aquifers and rivers. That water is needed for other societal purposes, including the drought-proofing of crop production by protective irrigation.

Where water is scarce, smaller amounts may be allocated for each individual. Furthermore, each unit of water will have to be reused as many times as possible through sequential use, which involves capturing, treating, and removing pollutants from water so it can be used again for another purpose. The ideal sequence of reuse would begin with household use, which requires the cleanest water, followed by industry and then agriculture, since most irrigation water returns to the atmosphere.

Serious work in water resource management, sanitation and public hygiene, and family planning have improved the balance between water and population in many areas. But the progress is generally slow and frustrating. Only now are the upper echelons in national government and development organizations beginning to realize that lasting improvements begin at the local level and involve local decision makers and non-governmental organizations. They need the help of a new generation of natural resource-oriented engineers and decision makers capable of finding the pathways and technical solutions to socio-economic development problems under conditions of escalating water scarcity. Support and co-operation at all levels of government and throughout society are necessary.

We also need co-operation among societies. Water systems transcend national boundaries; they cannot be successfully managed without active co-operation between local, national and international governments, industries, and other organizations.

The best advice to give national leaders in both the South and the North—both with much to gain from the environmentally sound development of drought-prone, poverty-stricken countries—is: Time for realism! Accept that different environments constitute different preconditions for human activity. When there isn't enough water, society will have to adapt both in its aspirations and in its activities.

The water-starved parts of the South should be exporting low-water goods produced from less limited natural resources such as minerals, using solar and other alternative forms of energy, and buying their food from abroad. After all, it is surely better to grow the crops where there is enough water than to suffer famine because the dry climate does not allow the goal of food self-reliance to be fulfilled.

Finally, balancing growing needs for clean water with its finite availability also requires a clear understanding of demographic forces. Rapid migration from the countryside to the city, high fertility rates, and shifting patterns of international migration will affect future water needs within regions, countries, and communities.

With better awareness of the global water systems and demographic trends, active management of water resources, and enlightened co-operation, the delicate balance between population and water can be maintained.

Richard Mock

It is time to turn the traditional approach to water on its head.

Richard Mack

Reproductive Tract Infections

Hundreds of millions of women suffer from reproductive tract infections (RTIs), most of which are sexually transmitted. Some, such as yeast infections, are due to an excess of organisms normally present in the vagina, while others result from poorly performed gynaecological, childbirth, or abortion services. *Reproductive Tract Infections: Global Impact and Priorities for Women's Reproductive Health* is a compilation of papers presented at a 1991 conference organized by the International Women's Health Coalition and the Rockefeller Foundation. The papers set out to assess the implications of RTIs for international health goals, including women's health, family planning, safe motherhood, child survival, and HIV control. They examine the impact of RTIs on the lives of women, and propose and assess the means and resources with which the infections can be prevented, controlled, and treated. Published by Plenum Press, New York and London, under its "Reproductive Biology" series. For more information, contact: International Women's Health Coalition, 24 East 21st Street, New York, NY 10010, USA. Telephone: (212) 979-8500. Fax: (212) 979-9009.

Russian Demographics

More than seven in 10 Russians lived in cities in 1990, compared to fewer than half in 1951. Yet, in one region of the country, most people moved from towns to the countryside. In 1989, there were 55.1 cars for every 1,000 Russians, compared to 3.4 in 1965. Most Russian industrial workers are employed in machine building and metal working—46.6 per cent, compared to 11.8 per cent working in light industry, the second-largest industrial employer.These are among the findings of *The First Demographic Portraits of Russia 1951-1990*, from New World Demographics. The 120-page paperback provides data for each of the country's regions and *oblasts*, or state-like administrative areas, covering such topics as population, family size, nationalities, housing space, employment, education, urbanization, and ownership of cars and other consumer durables. Priced at US$199.00 for businesses and governments, and US$99.00 for public libraries and academics. Available from: New World Demographics, L.C., P.O. Box 866, Shady Side, MD 20764, USA. Telephone: (410) 867-3767. Fax: (410) 867-0549.

After Rio

Following-up on the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held last year in Rio de Janeiro, UNFPA has "identified those chapters and programme areas of Agenda 21 that have programmatic, institutional, and/or financial implications for UNFPA, concentrating on those that are at or near the core of the Fund's concerns and mandate." This, according to *Population in the 21st Century: UNFPA and Agenda 21*. The booklet lays out those chapters and programme areas, and synthesizes the Fund's relevant policies and programme activities. Published by, and available from: Technical and Evaluation Division, UNFPA, 220 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017, USA.

Four Essays

Four Essays on Birth Control Needs and Risks is the first collection of essays in a series on issues and innovations in reproductive health published by the International Women's Health Coalition. The four essays, written by Ruth Dixon-Mueller, a consultant and former sociology professor, and Adrienne Germain, the Coalition's vice-president, are: "Are We Speaking the Same Language? Women's Health Advocates and Scientists Talk about Contraceptive Technology"; "Whose Life is it, Anyway? Assessing the Relative Risks of Contraception and Pregnancy"; "Defining the 'Unmet Need' for Family Planning"; and "Abortion *is* a Method of Family Planning." Published under the "Reproductive Tracts: Issues and Innovations in Reproductive Health" series, and available from: International Women's Health Coalition, 24 East 21st Street, New York, NY 10010, USA. Telephone: (212) 979-8500. Fax: (212) 979-9009.

Practical Guide

Detecting Pre-Eclampsia: A Practical Guide—Using and maintaining blood pressure equipment was published by the World Health Organization under its "Safe Motherhood" series. The illustrated booklet is available from: Safe Motherhood Programme, Division of Family Health, World Health Organization, 1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland.

African Videos

The Media for Development Trust is a non-profit organization concerned with development communications in Africa. Its activities include producing development-oriented films and videos, primarily for African audiences; hands-on training in film and video production; supporting new African film makers; providing technical support to local and international film crews; and promoting Zimbabwe's film industry internationally. For more information, or a

catalogue of products, contact: Media for Development Trust, P.O. Box 6755, Harare, Zimbabwe. Telephone/ Fax: (263-4) 729066.

Safe Motherhood Newsletter

Safe Motherhood, a newsletter of worldwide safe motherhood programme activity, is published three times a year in English and French by the World Health Organization. For free subscriptions, contact: Maternal Health and Safe Motherhood Programme, Division of Family Health, World Health Organization, 1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland. Telephone: (41-22) 791-3367. Fax: (41-22) 788-4264.

Conference Newsletter

ICPD 94 is the official newsletter of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development. Published every two months in English, French, and Spanish, it sets out to update readers on preparations for the decennial conference scheduled for September 1994 in Cairo, Egypt. For more information, contact: ICPD 94, ICPD Secretariat, c/o UNFPA, 220 East 42nd Street, 17th floor, New York, NY 10017, USA. Telephone: (212) 297-5244/5245/5222/5230. Fax: (212) 297-4915. Telex: 7607883.

Methodology Reader

Readings in Population Research Methodology is an eight-volume reference set excerpting more than 400 readings from journals, monographs, books, and working papers. Each of 27 chapters were edited by specialists in the respective fields, and refereed by an international group of experts. Volume titles are: *Basic Tools; Mortality Research; Fertility Research; Nuptiality, Migration, Household, Family Research; Population Models, Projections, and Estimates; Advanced Basic Tools; Contraception and Family Planning;* and *Environment and Economy*. The complete set, published on a non-profit basis for UNFPA, is priced at US$335.00 and is available from: Social Development Center, 1313 East 60th Street, Suite 67, Chicago, IL 60637, USA. Telephone: (312) 947-2010. Fax: (312) 947-2012.

Namibia Brief

Namibia Brief is a magazine published by the non-governmental Namibia Foundation with funding from the Swedish International Development Authority. The Foundation is "committed to the development of an independent, just, stable, and prosperous Namibia and the welfare of all its people." For more information, contact: The Secretary, Namibia Foundation, P.O. Box 2123, Windhoek, Namibia. Telephone: (061) 37250. Fax: (061) 37251.

Fact Sheets

A series of 19 one-page fact sheets providing essential statistics, emerging trends, and additional sources of information on given topics is available from the non-governmental Center for Population Options. Titles include: *Adolescent Childbearing and Educational Attainment; Adolescent Contraceptive Use; Adolescents and Abortion; Condom Efficacy and Use Among Adolescents; Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Youth: At Risk and Underserved; Media and Adolescent Sexuality; Parent-Child Communication about Sexuality;* and *Young Women and AIDS: A Worldwide Perspective*. Single fact sheets are priced at US$1.00 each; complete sets, US$10.00. Add 20 per cent for postage and handling. Available from: Center for Population Options, Publications Department, 1025 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Suite 210, Washington, D.C. 20005, USA. Telephone: (202) 347-5700. Fax: (202) 347-2263.

Women's, Human Rights

Ours By Right: Women's Rights as Human Rights, edited by Joanna Kerr, is based on presentations to and discussion at a conference on women's rights attended by leading lawyers and activists from 35 countries. It argues that the struggle for legal equality has made only minor gains in practice and indeed has suffered recent setbacks, in North and South. The book's first section provides case studies from Algeria, Brazil, Canada, Malaysia, Pakistan, South Africa, Uganda, the UK, and the USA. The second section examines barriers to funding women's rights programmes; the obstacles to the protection of rights posed by sovereignty; aid conditionality; and government accountability. The final section suggests strategies and actions for the broader struggle for women's rights that lies ahead. Available in hardback, priced at US$49.95 / UK£32.95, or in paperback, priced at US$19.95 / UK£12.95. Published by Zed Books with the North-South Institute. For more information, contact: Zed Books, Ltd., 57 Caledonian Road, London N1 9BU, UK. Telephone: (071) 837-4014/8466. Fax: (071) 833-3960. Or: Humanities Press International Inc., 165 First Avenue, Atlantic Highlands, NJ 07716, USA. Telephone: (908) 872-1441. Fax: (908) 872-0717.

	Condoms	Withdrawal
Description:	Sheath placed over erect penis. Most condoms are made of latex. Some are made from animal membrane.	Withdrawal of the penis from the vagina before ejaculation.
Resupply requirement:	Frequent	None
Lowest expected failure rate during the first year:	2 per cent	12 per cent
Typical failure rate during the first year:	4 per cent	18 per cent
Effect on risk of infection with sexually transmitted diseases (STDs):	Protective; condoms made from animal membrane are less effective, however.	None
Appropriate for breastfeeding women?	Yes	Yes
Return to fertility?	Immediately upon discontinuation.	Immediately upon discontinuation.
Side effects/ Complications:	Some users experience sensitivity to latex or lubricants. Condoms that are stored or used incorrectly or are out-of-date may break during use. Effectiveness can be increased by using with a vaginal spermicide.	Success depends on the man's ability to withdraw before ejaculation; the sexual pleasure of both man and woman is interrupted.

DICTIONARY

Parity

Parity is the number of children that have been born alive to a woman. For example, "two-parity women" are women who have had two children up to now, and "zero-parity women" have had no live births up to now.

(**Source**: Population Reference Bureau, *Population Handbook*, 3rd International Edition, 1991.)

Sources:

- World Health Organization, *Contraceptive Method Mix: Guidelines for Policy and Service Delivery*, as reported in: Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH), "Contraceptive Method Mix: The Importance of Ensuring Client Choice," in *Outlook*, Vol.10, No.1, May 1992.
- International Planned Parenthood Federation, World Health Organization, UNFPA statements as reported in POPULI and *Population*.

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